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Thousands on Flint children to receive food prescriptions to combat lead

By Roberto Acosta, MLIVE 05/09/16 3:00 PM

Thousands of Flint children will receive a different type of prescription following a recent donation to Hurley Children's Hospital to help them combat the effects of lead in the water. The Rite Aid Foundation has provided \$100,000 to the hospital that will allow for 10,000 prescriptions as part of the KidCents program for children six months and older to purchase healthy food purchases at the Flint Farmers' Market. The donation was announced during a May 5 press conference at Hurley Children's Hospital in downtown Flint that included comments from Richard Warmbold, president of the Hurley Foundation, Tracy Henderson, director of the Rite Aid Foundation and Charitable Giving Initiatives, and Dr. Mona Hanna-Attisha, director of the Pediatric Residency Program at Hurley Medical Center.

Starting today, thousands of people in Flint can sign up for expanded Medicaid benefits

By Steve Carmody, Michigan Radio 05/09/16 11:00 AM

Expanded Medicaid coverage starts in Flint today. The expanded Medicaid coverage was approved in response to the Flint water crisis. Medicaid will cover Flint residents up to 21 years old and pregnant women. Medicaid will cover Flint residents up to 21 years old and pregnant women. Medicaid will cover Flint residents up to 21 years old and pregnant women.

Michigan Official Denies Link Between Flint Water and Legionnaires' But Advised City 13 Months Ago How to Minimize Risk

By Tanasia Kenney, Atlanta Black Star 05/09/16

The city of Flint's decision to switch its main water source from Lake Huron to the Flint River resulted in a contaminated water supply and the poisoning of an entire city. Elevated lead levels in the water sickened many residents and sparked numerous cases of lead poisoning in adults and children all around the city. There was also an outbreak of Legionnaires' disease. A total of 12 people died from complications of the disease, yet state officials vehemently denied the toxic Flint water had anything to do with the outbreak. Stephen Busch was one of those officials.

DEQ official gave Flint advice for lowering risk of Legionnaires' 13 months ago

By Ron Fonger, MLIVE 05/08/16 7:10 AM

A state drinking water supervisor who downplayed suspicions that Flint water could be tied to an outbreak of Legionnaires' disease more than a year ago was simultaneously advising city officials what they could do to "minimize the potential" for future outbreaks. Stephen Busch, former district supervisor in the Michigan Department of Environmental Quality's Community Water Supply Program, detailed steps Flint should take to help limit the opportunity for legionella growth in customers' drinking water in a March 17, 2015, email to city and state officials.

Mayor Weaver says she and Obama on 'same page' regarding Flint water crisis

By Jiquanda Johnson, MLIVE 05/09/16 3:03 PM

Mayor Karen Weaver says she and President Barack Obama are working together to find a

solution for Flint residents. Weaver said she wants to make sure it is known that both local and federal agencies are on the "same page." I want to start by saying we were very pleased by President Obama's visit this week, and I don't appreciate anyone trying to insert divisiveness where there is none," Weaver said.

Obama tells Flint to check its children for lead poisoning

By Cheryl Sanders, News Today 05/09/16

"Well it is good to be back in Flint, Michigan", Obama said. A one-year-old child was found in the house where the crime took place but was unharmed and handed over to child protective services. As part of the plea agreement, Judge Jennifer Manley will not enter Glasgow's plea, but will instead reserve judgment, Harrison said. Snyder has said he wasn't told that Flint had a confirmed lead issue until October 1, 2015, and that he didn't know until January 2016 about the outbreak of Legionnaires' disease possibly linked to the switch in Flint's drinking-water source to Flint River water.

Editorial: Flint must remain a priority

By Detroit News 05/08/16 10:52 PM

President Barack Obama's visit to Flint last week highlights various needs still nagging at the city and its residents. Four months after the full extent of the city's water contamination crisis was revealed, many residents still avoid drinking or using the water, and money that was promised hasn't shown up. Both the Legislature and Congress are working on proposals that would provide much-needed funds for Flint. And though the blame game is still going around, both the president and Gov. Rick Snyder acknowledged the massive failure of government at all levels.

Take a look at the day Little Miss Flint met President Obama

By Roberto Acosta, MLIVE 05/08/16 4:38 PM

Amariyanna Copeny sprinted forward and into the arms of President Obama's arms, just like her mother said she would during a May 4 visit by the Commander-in-Chief to Flint. When asked what the president mentioned to her during their meeting at Northwestern High, the precocious 8-year-old grinned and uttered "He said do your homework." It was the young girl's letter that drew Obama him to the city to meet with residents and officials to get a feeling on the water crisis that's gripped Flint for more than two years.

Flint's Dr. Mona Hanna-Attisha Disappointed with Obama's Visit

By Deadline Detroit 05/07/16 10:54 AM

President Barack Obama came to Flint on Wednesday delivering a message of hope. But some were disappointed the talk of hope didn't come with more action. Detroit Free Press columnist Rochelle Riley writes: Dr. Mona Hanna-Attisha was torn.

President Obama Says Flint's Glass Is Half Full

By Arthur Delaney, Huffington Post 05/07/16 6:00 AM

For the past two years people in Flint, Michigan, have been given poisoned water that exposed an entire generation of kids to lead, a deadly toxin that can permanently damage developing brains. This week President Barack Obama traveled there to tell them they'll be okay. Kinda. "If you know that your child may have been exposed and you go to a health clinic, a doctor, a provider, and are working with them, then your child will be fine," Obama said. And he drank a glass of filtered Flint water.

Flint's Dr. Mona: Why didn't Obama bring more resources to fix problem?

By Rochelle Riley, Detroit Free Press 05/06/16 11:36 PM

Dr. Mona Hanna-Attisha was torn. As President Barack Obama offered a weary city words of hope and encouragement, she suddenly heard him say that "as long as kids are getting good health care, and folks are paying attention, and they're getting a good education, and they have community support, and they're getting some good home training, and they are in a community that is loving and nurturing and thriving, these kids will be fine." And the pediatrician who gained international attention for helping to reveal the extent of the Flint water crisis and who has made developing interventions for thousands of children poisoned by lead-laced water her mission, became worried.

Businesses and Housing

Flint transitioning from fire stations to neighborhood centers for water distribution

By Steve Carmody, Michigan Radio 05/09/16 4:30 PM

Michigan National Guardsmen are no longer distributing bottled water at three Flint fire stations

as part of the state response to the water crisis. Just before noon, guardsmen loaded pallets of the cases of bottled water onto trucks behind Flint Fire Station #8. For months, this was one of five Flint fire stations where residents went to pick up bottled water and filters. But the city is transitioning to nine neighborhood giveaway sites manned by paid employees. Staff Sergeant Thomas Vega says it's a sign of progress in the Flint water crisis.

Flint-area Land Bank getting millions more to rid blight

By AP for Washington Times 05/09/16

The Flint area is getting about \$14 million to demolish an estimated 1,030 homes. The Genesee County Land Bank Authority says the additional money from the federal government raises the aid to nearly \$49 million to demolish more than 3,700 homes in and around Flint.

New info session on \$1M in grants for Flint businesses in water crisis

By Roberto Acosta, MLIVE 05/08/16 10:28 PM

The latest in a series of information sessions has been scheduled to let small businesses know about \$1 million in grants available to help them through the impact of the Flint water crisis. The session has been set from 4:30 p.m.-6 p.m. Wednesday, May 11 at the Flint Public Library, 1026 E. Kearsley St. and will include a presentation on the grant program, guidelines, and information on those funding the program through the Genesee Chamber Foundation's Moving Flint Forward Fund.

David Jeup would tell businesses Flint is a Chernobyl

By Frank Witsil, Detroit Free Press 05/07/16 3:46 PM

As a boy, David Jeup would look out the car window on the long annual drives from Michigan to Florida vacation spots and wonder about the places and people he passed. "Back in the '70s driving from Detroit to my relatives' in Clearwater along I-75 — it was so different to go from the heavy industrial community I grew up in through farm lands to a touristy economy in Florida," Jeup, 53, recalled. "It always begged a question me: What do people do in in these regions, and why do they do it there?"

Lawsuit accuses Flint mayor of diverting water crisis donations to PAC

By Gary Ridley, MLIVE 05/09/16 4:41 PM

Former city administrator Natasha Henderson claims she was fired after reporting Mayor Karen Weaver may have been telling staff to direct water crisis donations to her own personal funds. Henderson filed a federal lawsuit Monday, May 9, in Detroit U.S. District Court, claiming she was fired from her position after asking the city attorney's office to investigate claims Weaver may have been telling city staff and volunteers to send potential water crisis donors to her own personal account, rather than the official fund managed by the Community Foundation of Greater Flint.

Fired Flint official files whistleblower lawsuit against Weaver, city

By Tresa Baldas, Detroit Free Press 05/09/16 4:38 PM

The Flint water crisis has triggered yet another lawsuit, this one filed by the city's former administrator, who claims she was wrongfully fired for blowing the whistle on the mayor of Flint for allegedly trying to steer money from a charity for local families into a campaign fund. Natasha Henderson, who now lives in Muskegon, claims in a lawsuit filed today in U.S. District Court that she was terminated on Feb. 12 as city administrator for seeking an investigation into Flint Mayor Karen Weaver and the handling of donations that were supposed to help families impacted by the water crisis. Henderson signed a five-year contract with Flint in 2014 after beating out more than 25 candidates for the job of city administrator, the highest non-elected office in Flint.

Former Flint city administrator suing city, Mayor Weaver

By Steve Carmody, Michigan Radio 05/09/16 4:30 PM

Flint's former city administrator is suing the city and Mayor Karen Weaver. The lawsuit claims Natasha Henderson was fired after she raised questions about donations to a Flint water crisis charity being redirected to another fund created by Mayor Weaver. Katherine Smith Kennedy is Henderson's attorney. She claims Henderson's job was terminated hours after she raised the issue with the city attorney. "The timing is so suspicious," says Kennedy, who admits she doesn't know if there was anything illegal about redirecting donations.

Ex-official sues Flint mayor, city for wrongful firing

By Jennifer Chambers, Detroit News 05/09/16 2:31 PM

Former Flint city administrator Natasha Henderson is suing Flint Mayor Karen Weaver and the

city for wrongful termination, alleging her rights under the Whistleblower Protection Act and the First Amendment were violated after she reported that Weaver was redirecting charity cash. In a lawsuit filed Monday in U.S. District Court in Flint, Henderson is seeking unspecified damages related to her firing on Feb. 12 when Weaver announced that Henderson had been “relieved of her responsibilities.”

Focus on Flint

By Sandee LaMotte & Photos by Matt Black, CNN 05/09/16

When photographer Matt Black enters an impoverished city to begin capturing its essence, he says it feels like coming home. "I feel a really strong connection to these places," he said. "It's really kind of an outgrowth of the place where I grew up, where I live: in the central valley of California, where poverty is always present." Black, 45, has been capturing images of the nation's poor for more than 20 years. He has profiled over 100 cities across 39 states as part of an ongoing project he calls "The Geography of Poverty." He deliberately chooses communities in which one in five people live in poverty.

Putting a human face on the water crisis in Flint, Michigan

By Roe Ruttenberg, CCTV-America 05/08/16

The water supply of the U.S. city of Flint, Michigan became poisoned after its water source was switched to cut costs. The result was a public health emergency, as thousands of residents were exposed to the contamination. Correspondent Roe Ruttenberg traveled to Flint for “Americas Now.” He gives us an up-close look at the people and the politics behind the Flint Water Crisis. He also tells us about the community's thirst for justice.

Still standing: 100 Flint residents dealing with a poisoned water system

By Jake May, MLIVE

The story of the Flint water crisis is not just about the politics — it's about the people. As a resident, I use a case of bottled water every day for general hygiene, cooking and drinking. My job is to show the world the faces of the people of Flint, to help humanize this disaster. Earlier this year, I visited several sites across Flint to take portraits of 100 people dealing with the crisis. 100 portraits. 1/1000th of the community. These are the stories of my neighbors. We are more than a sound bite. We are human beings who want a basic human right, who want clean water

running through our taps.

Other News & Opinions

In Flint crisis, questions grow over quest for pipeline

By Tammy Webber AP for Seattle Times 05/09/16 2:07 PM

With drab olive chairs and worn carpet, the conference room in the low-slung administrative building near the Genesee County wastewater treatment plant isn't fancy, but it showcases one of Jeff Wright's greatest treasures: Permit No. 2009-001.

Legislative panel takes a broader view of Flint water crisis

By Steve Carmody, Michigan Radio 05/09/16 11:00 AM

A legislative panel investigating the Flint water crisis will hear a report tomorrow about how serious the problem might be in the rest of the state. The Michigan Infrastructure & Transportation Association and Public Sector Consultants released a report last month on Michigan's water infrastructure. Mike Nystrom with MITA says the report found Michigan is up to a half billion dollars short annually of what it should spend on water infrastructure. "That's why communities across the state are concerned...at the local level...that they might be the next Flint or something similar to that," says Nystrom. Earlier this year, Gov. Snyder created an advisory commission to study the state's infrastructure needs. Its recommendations are due at the end of the year.

10 Things They Won't Tell You about the Flint Water Tragedy. But I Will.

By Michael Moore, MichaelMoore.com

News of the poisoned water crisis in Flint has reached a wide audience around the world. The basics are now known: the Republican governor, Rick Snyder, nullified the free elections in Flint, deposed the mayor and city council, then appointed his own man to run the city. To save money, they decided to unhook the people of Flint from their fresh water drinking source, Lake Huron, and instead, make the public drink from the toxic Flint River. When the governor's office discovered just how toxic the water was, they decided to keep quiet about it and covered up the extent of the damage being done to Flint's residents, most notably the lead affecting the children, causing irreversible and permanent brain damage. Citizen activists uncovered these actions, and the governor now faces growing cries to resign or be arrested.

Angell Elementary students purchase bottled water for Flint students

By Lauren Slagter, MLIVE 05/08/16 9:03 AM

A lesson on needs versus wants led first graders at Angell Elementary School in Ann Arbor to raise more than \$1,000 to purchase 300 cases of bottled water for students in Flint. Eastern Michigan University student teacher Abigail Bruce, from Brighton, had students in Kristina Heppner's class at Angell Elementary research the Flint water crisis as part of a class project. Students learned the difference between a need and a want, and they discussed how people in Flint did not have their need for clean water met. "It was at this time that the children came up with the idea to hold a fundraiser to buy water for Flint," Bruce said in a press release. "The class worked together to create a plan, inform others and collect donations."

Former Flint EM spoke to Snyder about testifying

By Paul Egan, Detroit Free Press 05/06/16 10:42 PM

Former Flint emergency manager Darnell Earley told the U.S. House Oversight Committee this week that he spoke to Gov. Rick Snyder about his invitation to testify before the committee. And that disclosure, made by Earley in answers to written follow-up questions the committee sent him, has the ranking Democrat on the committee pushing to know more. "He now finally admits that he talked to Gov. Snyder about whether to appear before Congress, but he still refuses to tell us what he said," in the Feb. 1 conversation, U.S. Rep. Elijah Cummings, D-Md., said in a statement sent to the Free Press on Friday. "After Mr. Earley talked to the governor, he spoke with his lawyer, who refused to accept a subpoena from our chairman, and the governor issued a press release praising Mr. Earley for his service."

After Newark and Flint — Mandating Clean Water for All School Kids

By Congressman Donald Payne, Huffington Post 05/09/16 5:01 PM

When I traveled to Michigan last month as part of a Congressional delegation to hear directly from the families impacted by the Flint water crisis, I had a thought in the back of my head that a similar crisis could happen in New Jersey, particularly in Newark, our nation's third-oldest city. After all, our outdated water infrastructure is in desperate need of repair, aged to the point at which it threatens higher levels of lead in our water. My fear came true just days after I returned from Flint, when 30 Newark public schools — nearly half of the district's state-controlled public schools — were found to have elevated levels of lead in their drinking water.

Crises like Flint are inevitable when politicians and industries insist on playing with matches

By Mary Heather Noble, Quartz 05/09/16 1:30 PM

Years ago, I worked as an environmental regulator. The site was a former machining facility perched on a hill with a slug of solvent underfoot. The community in which it was located was a working-class New England town; the neighborhood, a cluster of late 1970s-era split-level homes surrounding an industrial park. On paper, the layout was lovely: industry and homes convenient to each other and the highway, yet out of sight from one another thanks to a patch of forest. In the fall, the trees would turn a vibrant red in the fall, the kind of shade that pops against a bluebird sky and makes you nostalgic for donuts and apple cider.

EPA faces pressure to overhaul rules around lead-in-water testing

By Brady Dennis Washington Post for Boston Globe 05/07/16

For a quarter of a century, the federal rule dictating how communities test for and control lead in drinking water has satisfied virtually no one. Over the past six years, the Environmental Protection Agency has been trying to rewrite its complex, controversial regulations. And for the past six months, as the water-contamination crisis in Flint, Mich., became a national embarrassment, the pressure has built to finish the job. There is widespread agreement that major changes are well overdue for the Lead and Copper Rule, which governs about 68,000 public water systems and affects the health of millions of Americans.

Sticker Shock of Fixing Flint's Lead Problem Hints at Colossal Price Tag for US-Wide Remedy

By Susanna Kim, ABC News 05/07/16 1:13 AM

For Americans who may think that the lead contaminated water crisis in Flint, Michigan, is a distant, if unfortunate, problem, President Obama had some sobering words of caution this week, noting that Flint is just one example of the nation's infrastructure in dire straits. "The broader issue, though, is we've got bridges, we've got roads, we have ports, we have airports, we have water mains and pipes -- as we saw in Flint -- that suffer from neglect," Obama said Friday during a press briefing during which he pointed to failures in Flint as well as those in the subway system of the nation's capital. "And in many parts of the country, we're still relying on systems that were built 30, 50, in some cases 100 years ago," the president said.

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